

## Interview with Kenneth P.T. Sullivan

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

KENNETH P. T. SULLIVAN

Interviewed by: Thomas Dunnigan

Initial interview date: October 25, 1994

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*Q: This is Thomas Dunnigan. Today I will be talking to Kenneth Sullivan, who spent more than 30 years in the Foreign Service. Ken and I are old friends and it is a pleasure to be with him again. The date is October 25, 1994. Ken, let's begin by your telling me how you became interested in a career in the Foreign Service. Did you prepare for it in college or did it come along later?*

SULLIVAN: Well, it turns out that I had prepared for it in college, but not that I had the Foreign Service in mind at that time. I was in the military and had volunteered in response to a circular asking for staff officers with knowledge of European languages, which ultimately led them catching up with me. My assignment was to the group which was to be the basis for the Military Occupation of Germany under General Clay. This took me up to Berlin among the advance group people and I was working with an outfit called Liaison and Protocol which in effect supplied the interpreters and translators at the quadripartite level of the occupation of all of Germany.

*Q: Now you are talking about 1945, right at the end of World War II?*

SULLIVAN: That is right. And then, while there I decided it was an interesting job and converted to a civilian. I went to the States first and came back again as a civilian in the

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same job. I had taken the Foreign Service examination more or less as a lark, not that I knew anything about the Foreign Service. When I passed the thing I asked a friend of mine who was a Foreign Service officer if he thought I would like it. He thought so, so when I was made an offer in September, 1947, I accepted it.

*Q: You were appointed at Berlin to stay in Berlin and were assigned there?*

SULLIVAN: That is right. They started saving money on me. I was in Berlin so they just kept me there. I was assigned to the visa section of the US Political Advisor's office where I spent a year being broken in by Andrew Hanne, a former Immigration and Naturalization Service specialist who was a wonderful instructor. A second year I spent there in charge of the visa section, which was a very big section at that time. The consular section embraced all of what was then not only Berlin but East Berlin and East Germany.

*Q: Both of which were under Soviet control. SULLIVAN: That's right.*

*Q: Now, consular work in Berlin in the immediate post-war period had some extra dimensions to it. What did you do with people who had been Nazis?*

SULLIVAN: Basically there was a prohibition on issuing visas except to parents or wives of US citizens. So the visa operation in the beginning was not very much involved in that. The second part of the thing was that we had access through an arrangement, which I won't disclose in any detail, to the records which were kept in an office in East Berlin called the Opfer des Faschismus, (The Victims of Fascism), which actually was a clearing house for East Germans who were up for employment under Russian control. We merely had to say the word, if we didn't say it too often, and we would get what was the equivalent of a photostat of what they had put in their records to impress the Russians, and we had a pretty good idea of whether they were communists from that also, as well as who were the Nazis. So there was not too much of a problem with that.

*Q: Were people able to come in from East Germany into the office at that time?*

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SULLIVAN: Surprisingly they had little trouble with it except some times making the date because of poor transportation. The postal system wasn't very good, but my predecessor had developed a line convincing all those who were successful in getting visas, that they would have no use in the United States or in West Germany for their East German currency which was pre-war German currency over stamped. So they all put it in a hat when they were getting on the train and we would use this to send telegrams because the East German telegraph operation accepted these Marks and we would send notification to our people by telegram and we had a pretty good field on that.

*Q: That is what I call a field expedient.*

SULLIVAN: Yes, until the inspectors caught up with us.

*Q: To carry it one step further, there were many Germans I know who came from areas which were formally German but had been taken over by the Russians or Poles. Did any of them get to the consulate? Did they need visa services? How did you handle these refugees?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, we had a lot of them for the first part of my tour there. We couldn't do much about them, because, as I said, we were limited to non-quota visa cases. But then we opened up a full operation about a year later by which time I was supervising. It was the operation, the opening of regular immigration throughout Germany but it worked only for West Germany at that time and West Berlin. In the previous time and through the full program time we got all kinds of visa request. We even had a couple of Tibetans who came in looking for visas to go to the United States. We had an awful time figuring out what was on their mind because nobody could speak Tibetan and they couldn't speak even Russian. But we happened to have one of the members of my former unit in the Liaison and Protocol Section who came from that part of the world and he managed to find out at least what was on their minds, but we couldn't satisfy their hopes. But we couldn't do

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much. The Refugee and Displaced Person legislation that had effect in Berlin was taken up pretty much by Jewish refugees.

*Q: I wanted to ask you about the effect of the Refugee and Displaced Person Act of 1948 that Congress passed. I know that altered a good deal of what our consular people did in Germany.*

SULLIVAN: Well, I could only say something about that secondhand because that was about the time I finished work in the visa section. It was in effect somewhat a broader program than one that had been in operation before, which I think was known as the Presidential Executive Order of December 22, 1945, that President Truman had issued. It was an executive order to take care of a limited number of Jewish refugees and that was what was the basis for the legislation that broadened the whole field up. And, what that did in effect, was to make for a faster placement of displaced persons and a broader eligibility count. But, I was no longer working with that as a visa person.

*Q: Having once been a visa officer myself, I know that certain pressures are brought on our people. Were any pressures brought on you in Berlin?*

SULLIVAN: Well, I got a commendation in writing one time for responding to an attempted pressure deal. Somebody had started a rumor that the way to get a visa in Berlin was to sleep with one of the visa officers. And this gained some currency in the United States. It came to its culmination in the case I am about to describe, shortly after we had opened up for regular immigration. That required us to announce on the radio, because the papers were not reliable, that we were going to open up on such-and-such a date and the first step was to make a written request to have a form sent. Then to submit the form which would indicate that you had requested entry on the register of intending immigrants, which was the book that decided when a person would be called up. To make a long story short, I got a letter from a religious person in the United States complaining that the relative of one of his constituents was denied an early place on the visa register and, indeed, a visa

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because she refused to sleep with a consular officer. This letter was rather long with all sorts of reported details.

It bothered me quite a bit since we from the first day on had picked up approximately a 100,000 applications a week. In fact, we had picked up a few hundred before we had sent out any forms. These I had kept in alphabetical order expecting that if anyone had the ingenuity to make an application to get on the register before the register opened, there might be follow-up. And what do you know, there was. That lady was in that group. She didn't bother to file a formal visa request, as far as I knew, because we only registered the first 100,000 which was more than enough to fill our quota for a couple of decades... So I wrote a letter back to the gentleman and explained that I knew there was a rumor, and people who were disgruntled often made rumors like this. In fact they were commonplace when people were talked to each other in Nazi-ruled Germany.

But that is about all the pressure there was. Sometimes I did have requests again from interested parties , most of them well intended, about why we didn't moved certain cases a little faster than the others under the refugee programs. Mostly I had to tell them regrettably that we needed sponsors who have to post a bond and all other things being equal if people qualified, we shipped the ones that had a bond because that was a requirement.

*Q: Then in 1950 you moved down to Tübingen in the French Zone of Germany.*

SULLIVAN: Well, actually a little earlier than that I moved out of Berlin. They moved the administrative headquarters to Frankfurt.

*Q: The administrative headquarters of the Displaced Person program?*

SULLIVAN: Oh no, they moved the administrative headquarters of what was by that time the Office of Military Government US.

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*Q: From OMGUS to HICOG.*

SULLIVAN: The Little Occupation Statute is what they called it. I was the POLAD's (Political Advisor) representative on the board that threw out in effect the bulk of military government law and regulations. Presumably I got this job because of my experience in the adjutant general's department in the military as well as working with the quadripartite group in Berlin.

*Q: You were in Frankfurt for some months then.*

SULLIVAN: That is right.

*Q: And then you moved down to the French Zone. Tell us a little about that and how it came about.*

SULLIVAN: Under the civilian occupation there was to be a high commissioner for each of the nations—the French, British and American—and each of us had a zone, the same as under the military government arrangement. And to facilitate the uniform implication of the tripartite agreed policies, they had not only a Land Commissioner in each of the constituent states of West Germany, but they had Land Observers from the other two parties. I thought this would be interesting work and because as a German major I knew a fair amount of the country and had had my fill with working with large departments in the Army and in the embassy, so I asked if I could be considered for one of these posts and I wound up by getting an assignment as the deputy US Land Observer to what was then called the state of Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern, not the Land.

*Q: If you were the deputy, the Observer, himself, lived where? In Stuttgart?*

SULLIVAN: No, he was, as most of the Land Observers were, a person of some political linkage. He was a very nice person who had first gotten to Europe working with Hoover's Relief Commission after World War I and he met and married a French woman and spent

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most of his life in Europe in between the wars. He worked for an American electrical company that had branches. Some of the time he was in England, but he was mostly in France. After he got this job he spent practically all of his time on the job in Tubingen with the French members of the command. And he spent more of his time away in Paris with his wife. His instructions to me were that I seemed to be interested in things and I should go about doing things and if he was ever needed to call him up and he would come up and do whatever I asked him to help with.

*Q: A subordinate couldn't ask for better instructions.*

SULLIVAN: That's right, that's right.

*Q: To whom did you report in the American channel?*

SULLIVAN: Well, once a month one of us, normally it was me—I think it was me all except for two times—, went up to a meeting in Bonn which had the U.S. Land Commissioners and Observers from all over Germany come together for a monthly meeting. I think it was just one day, but it might possibly have been two. At that time, if you had business in any particular subsection of the embassy you could stay over and take care of it. But down in the French Zone, the French ran a pretty tight shop and the main business that I had with the embassy was to tell some of the people to let me know before they came down to the area or they might wind up in jail, which a couple of them did. But we got them out.

*Q: How did the French authorities treat you?*

SULLIVAN: I didn't have any problems at all. The commanding general was actually a civilian banker who had apparently a pretty good military record and stayed on afterwards and was still addressed as General. But he had a civilian attitude and with some staff help he dictated the constitution of Wurttemberg/ Hohenzollern, and knew pretty well how it was going. He was a good person to deal with, but there wasn't much dealing to do. The various subsections of this state still had what were called town majors or town

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mayors by the British, and these were in most cases in the French arrangement, French colonels who had large numbers of dependents because all this could be charged off to German occupation costs. There was really not much to do down there but they didn't want everything seen.

*Q: Did the French object in any way with your meeting with German officials and did you have a chance to meet with many Germans?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, yes. I could meet with them. It was a delightful experience as a matter of fact and one of my chief contacts there was a very famous German political scientist, which was a very rare thing, a man by the name of Theodor Eschenberg. He was not a local person and intentionally so because they had a refugee problem in Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern. The natives down there do not like to deal with anything that is contentious, so they got Prof. Eschenberg who had been professor at the University of Tübingen some years before and was actually a north German and didn't mind dealing with such things. He was a wonderful contact and particularly because he was trying to democratize the German political and governmental life. This was not the best place to do it from so he often went out and gave lectures elsewhere for which he would be rebuked by the parliament. He would tell them that he accepted their rebuke and then would go out and make two more speeches. It was a very quiet area.

*Q: You were assigned, I believe, next to German language and area training back in Washington or back in the Department?*

SULLIVAN: Well, it was actually at Harvard University. There was a program at that time, I believe it had started the year before, which grew out of historical fact that the Foreign Service had essentially operated on what might be called an apprenticeship system traditionally, at least in more or less modern times since World War I. The result of bad relations with Germany culminating in a rather long war was that there was a gap of specialists in Central Europe that normally would have been filled by people who had



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served there as they had gone up the ladder. They selected a certain number of people that had interest and some particular background such as my German background, to give an opportunity to fill in the middle ranks and pass as German specialists.

*Q: Did you find your time at Harvard valuable?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, wonderfully valuable. We had a very nice arrangement there. The Department told us that under no circumstances to try to get credit in more than one easy course because they were fearful that the professors would have us writing chapters for their books. They told us in effect that we had carte blanche to attend any classes in any part of the university, undergraduate or graduate, and without bothering to get permission from the professors. So we would fulfill what gaps we thought we had to the best of our ability. Of course, we all had more gaps than time to fill. In some cases the four of us who were there agreed that we all would like to know something about an area that we couldn't find covered by the personnel at Harvard and our faculty advisor managed to find a little money here and there and go out and find some specialist in some other place and invite them up. We had an agreement there that if they gave us a book list...these visitors would give us a book list of at least six titles and each one of us would have read four of them by the time the visitor came. We would have an afternoon roundtable discussion, etc. led by the visiting specialist and then we would have dinner at the faculty club and then we would adjourn to a pub and buy beer for the visitors until it was too late to go on any further. It was a very helpful arrangement.

*Q: It sounds to me as a very attractive year for you there.*

SULLIVAN: It was, but we had classes six days a week.

*Q: Following that year you were assigned to Dusseldorf.*

SULLIVAN: That is right, back to Germany. I wasn't assigned to Dusseldorf, I was assigned to Bonn. I went in on the day I arrived and reported to the political counselor,

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John Davis, an old China hand who was under some stress at the time, and told him that Bonn had been my eighth out of eight choices, and could he do something and get me out of there. I explained to him that I had had my fill of large organizations, I didn't have enough rank to make much of a dent in the embassy and I would appreciate it if they could send me somewhere like Tübingen where I could get to know somewhat more intimately a part of Germany that I didn't know. He arranged for me to go on a temporary basis to Düsseldorf, pending a probable assignment to Hamburg. The trouble was Hamburg didn't open up before I had found a permanent assignment in Düsseldorf.

*Q: What was your job in Düsseldorf?*

SULLIVAN: I went down temporarily to substitute for a political officer who was coming back from home leave and going to go to the embassy. While this was transacting slowly because of budget problems for home leave and transfer money, the administrative officer that we had there went on home leave. She had gotten orders before the budget troubles caught up. The consul general asked me if I would stay on since the Hamburg job hadn't opened and administer since I had been doing it in the military and on a civilian basis with the military for about six years. So I did. And while I was doing that, the full time labor specialist they had there who was a professional labor person from the United Steel Workers and had been sent over there mainly to watch the formation of what hoped to be the International Authority Ruhr, which later became what is now the European Common Market. He got a call from his union telling him that if he didn't get back pretty soon, his union would probably forget about him and he would have no job. So he went back and the consul general, who had told me that he was pleased with my substituting as a political and admin officer, wondered if I would like to stay full time as a labor officer because he had heard that I had written a paper at Harvard on German labor. I assured him that I had written a paper, but really it didn't have much to do with German labor, the emphasis was supposed to be German labor under the Nazis and it was practically all banned about the day the Germans took over. But he said, "Well, we won't tell them about that." So I stayed.

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This was a wonderful assignment because the headquarters of the 16 union federation were in Dusseldorf. The labor attach# was in Bonn and was a friend of mine from my Berlin days and he didn't speak German and he usually had to do a lot of his work with the headquarters, the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund. I had four unions that were headquartered in my area for which I was responsible. And I was also responsible for any union activities from unions outside the area that took place in my district, and my district was North Rhine - Westphalia which was the largest district in Germany and there was quite a bit of work there. So I got a good broad ranging knowledge of the trade union movement as well, of course, of the management association which parallels in a sense the trade union movement. The big thing on the political side in those days was the introduction, which started in the British Zone, of something that which is known as co-determination, a very interesting concept designed to open up the transmission of information and ideas throughout the coal and steel industries which had been very stratified before. This was a very interesting thing. I had the opportunity to work during my spell there and actually exploit the talents of two very bright young graduate students, one of whom was later Treasury Secretary, Mike Blumenthal, and the other chap, Herbert Spiro, who was a member of Policy Planning some years later, also served as an ambassador in Africa. Each one of them wrote a book on co-determination and gave me a nice sendoff in their introductions. One from the political side and one from the economic side. Actually they made me look good as an expert on Mitbestimmung.

*Q: Well, you were right there from almost the beginning of co-determination.*

SULLIVAN: Pretty much.

*Q: It has gotten broader, I know, and invaded a number of countries. Well, this explains a lot about your background, how you became a labor officer later on.*

SULLIVAN: Yes, that is right. There was quite a gap in that, but not a total gap. When I was finishing my time in Dusseldorf, as was the practice in those days you started to look

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for a place where you thought you could steer yourself to for your next post. My interest was basically Germany looking to the East. I thought I would like to get some firsthand experience with communists, but I didn't want to become a Sovietologist and didn't want to undertake much in language training, since I already had a geographic specialty. But I saw that the position of chief of the consular branch in Belgrade was coming open and I had worked for Ambassador Riddleberger previously and I wrote and told him of my interest in having some experience in a communist country and that I was more interested in how it affected the people than in the government. I thought that the consular section in Belgrade would be about the only opportunity that I could think of where I would have that chance, if he would have me. Of course, he knew of my consular work before and he said that if I could make it he would welcome me. And I did. I was lucky. He was correct when he said that he didn't think many officers with my background in politics would be asking to take a consulate post in a hardship post that was communist.

*Q: So you went there as a consular officer.*

SULLIVAN: I was the chief of the consular branch. I was there for a little over three years.

*Q: How does one operate as a consular officer in a communist country like Yugoslavia?*

SULLIVAN: It was not all that much different from working as a visa officer in the first phase of my Berlin years where we had a district in which you were, in the case of East Germany, were not permitted to travel there, but the people had to come see you. Now, we were able to travel fairly freely within Yugoslavia, but it was pointless for a consular officer to do that as most of your work is bureaucratic paper work and the people will come to see you because you have what they want.

*Q: Were you able to do any labor work while you were in Yugoslavia?*

SULLIVAN: No, after I had been there for some months the economic counselor asked me if I would be willing to be labor attach# if they got the job opened and I told them

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that I would not. And I didn't think they should have a labor attach# anyway because the atmosphere there was absolutely unreceptive to labor work that would be meaningful to the United States. I told them that if they had any specific problems, I would be glad to do what I could, but I certainly wouldn't have the labor job because it didn't make any sense. This later turned out to be true. Some time after I was safely away from there, they did send a very qualified labor officer down and within a few months the Embassy was told that this man was bothersome so to finish his tour they made him principal officer in Zagreb and he ran the consular operation there.

*Q: Any other comments about your days in Yugoslavia?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, it was fantastically interesting because we could do actually quite a bit of political work. As I had done in Berlin when I moved from the political section to the consular branch, I asked my colleagues in these substantive fields if they had any questions I might help them out with. This was particularly the case in East Germany as well as in Belgrade because there were food problems. It was a simple matter, there were so few visas being issued, and people so eager to get them that you could quite easily call people in from a given village even and do a preliminary check on them and, of course, ask them if they got their rations or any other thing. So we got sort of an opinion poll from time to time. We only used one topic at a time with one person at a time so it was not intrusive. I managed to keep a little bit more informed in what was actually going on than some of the substantive officers that had no travel money.

*Q: Now you were in Belgrade. Did you deal only with the Serbs or did the Slovenians and Croatians and others come in too?*

SULLIVAN: We dealt with anybody who came in. But if there were troubling times, most of the troubling times came from American citizens getting in trouble with the local authorities. In those cases I was fortunate that my predecessor had told me one thing that was invaluable before he left. He said, "Don't bother with the Foreign Office if you

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want to get anything done. It just takes forever because they have to ask the secret police and the secret police doesn't answer very quickly." I asked my predecessor why he hadn't gone to see the secret police and said, "You would never do that." So, when I was about to make my initial calls I asked the ambassador if he had any objections if I called on the chief of the Section for Foreigners of the secret police. He said, "Why not. The most useful contact I have is the Minister of the Interior who is in charge of the secret police." So I established a pretty good contact and, of course, ties with the Chief of the Section for Foreigners, who was, by the way, a Slovenian and spoke fluent German so we had no trouble getting along. We worked on a very simple principle that he and I were equally interested, although for different reasons, in having zero population of Americans in Yugoslavia jails. And it worked very nicely.

*Q: After your...*

SULLIVAN: Oh, one other thing.

*Q: Yes, please.*

SULLIVAN: Towards the end of my tour we had one incident that was very interesting. They had a revolution in Hungary.

*Q: Oh yes, 1956.*

SULLIVAN: Right along the border and I went up to watch the revolution which you could see from the border. The Serbian guards up there claimed that there was lots of fog and they couldn't see what was going on, but you could see what was going on. After the Russians got control of things, the first thing they did was stop the flow of Hungarians to Austria, which meant that the ones who were doing the fighting and wanted to escape had to come to Yugoslavia, which they did reluctantly since the Yugoslavs and Hungarians are mutually antipathetic. But this communist Yugoslav state some how or either felt bound by the Charter of the United Nations to grant political asylum to these fleeing Hungarians.

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They stripped the soldiers of their uniforms and weapons and trucks and gave them political asylum and put them in the now closed summer hotels. It took quite some time for Washington, particularly Congress, to recognize that about a quarter of all Hungarian refugees had fled to Yugoslavia not because Yugoslavia was communist, but because it was the only place they could flee to.

So I wound up, under the direction of Ambassador Riddleberger, as being the coordinator at the embassy of what proved to be a rather considerable refugee effort, although it was about a year late in getting going due to clearance which was done mostly by intelligence persons who were under rather strict control and we had international organizations and a number of our Immigration and Naturalization Service people on special operations. So it was very interesting business telling these people how to keep their nose clean. And then I was the contact between them and the secret police which was in charge of the whole business. Some fascinating anecdotal stories came out of this. It was a good effort and certainly interesting.

*Q: So you were able to help many of the Hungarian Freedom Fighters to get to the US.*

SULLIVAN: Well, not personally, but I facilitated the process. There was another group there. I must tell an anecdotal incident of the time to give you a little idea of the mentality of how Balkan people are. Shortly after I took over as consul, we began to get a very heavy number of requests for registration on the immigrant waiting list. As a matter of fact, in something like six or seven months we got about 100,000 applications which were as many as we had had from the time the office was open after World War II. And, of course, the quota was extremely small. Before any of the new applications came in the waiting list would have been five years for some of them already on the list. It turned out after a good deal of trouble including hiring extra people to do this registration, that a small group of Yugoslavs who were discontent with communism and with Tito had figured out that there is an American requirement that we publish the status and numerical count of our waiting list for immigration and that this is available in the United Nations once a year. So they set

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out to try to get the entire population of Yugoslavia registered as intending immigrants and they hoped that in this way if it were brought up in the United Nations, the United Nations would do something to get rid of Tito. This caused a little bit of indelicate relations between myself and my friend in the secret police section for foreigners, but I was as baffled as he was for several months. I think he figured it out sooner than I did.

*Q: That is an interesting story. Well, after your adventures in Belgrade, you left Europe and moved on to Africa, Khartoum, specifically.*

SULLIVAN: Yes.

*Q: There you were political officer, I understand. What did that have you doing?*

SULLIVAN: Not much. I was the first political officer assigned to the post which had been in existence a little over two years when I got there. It started off as a listening post with a man by the name of Sweeney or McSweeney, I have forgotten. And then, when Khartoum got its independence it became an embassy and we had an ambassador and a couple of other State Department officers and several agency people there. The ambassador was sick a good deal of the time and later went home and did not return to the post. When I got there Mr. Moose had just taken over as the ambassador and I was the first political officer assigned to the post as such.

I said there was not much to do. In the first place, the only reason we had an embassy or any sort of a post at Khartoum was because it was the capital of a recognized United Nations country. There was really nothing of action there, internally or externally, that made a great deal of difference to the country itself or anybody else. Once when asked by the ambassador what I would do if I could have my druthers about Khartoum, I said that I would consider, if it were up to me, whether I might go so far as to do what most of the small European countries did, that is take their junior officer in their embassy in Cairo and send him down every year for a week or two in what passed for winter when



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the temperature at night got below ninety, and look around and just be impressed with the nothingness that existed there. So there was not much going there.

I found out much later a possible reason why I was sent to Khartoum was when the political officer's post was established as was the custom at that time, other agencies had a voice in whether it would be approved or not approved, and the Labor Department approved the assignment of the political officer with the proviso that the State Department would try to get an officer with labor background because of the importance of the labor movement in the Sudan. But I came to know during my tour there that the only probable reason that the Labor Department was of that opinion was the two Sudanese who studied at the London School of Economics and had written books for their thesis on labor in the Sudan. This led somebody in the Labor Department to believe there was a labor movement there, which in fact was not true.

*Q: Did you find the Sudanese cooperative or difficult to work with?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, the Sudanese were officially and even those few that you would meet on a social basis, very few who could speak English, were most cordial. It was one of those places, however, where you had a language barrier and it restricts contacts if you don't speak Arabic mightily. You also had an illiteracy rate in the country which was then estimated to be about 95 percent. So it didn't make much difference whether you spoke Arabic which was then an alternative national language and later became the national language and was spoken only by a minority of Sudanese anyway, including those Sudanese who characterized themselves as Arabs. They speak a wide variety of mutually unintelligible dialects, most of which were when I was there had not been reduced to writing.

*Q: It is a huge country. Did you get to travel around at all?*

SULLIVAN: I was the first one to my knowledge of the embassy ever to get into the Southern Sudan and I did that by taking leave and accompanying the deputy public affairs

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officer who had authority from his agency to take a jeep and driver and travel through the south to record native songs to use in VOA broadcasts.

*Q: Were the troubles on then between the south and the...?*

SULLIVAN: Well, it took us about two months to get leave because supposedly there was warfare all over the area and the individual provincial governors had to give their approval. When we got the approval we traveled all over and were never bothered anywhere. We saw all of the provincial governors and the only reports that we got from the clergymen, who were the main people that we could speak with in a language that any of us knew, was that there were always rumors of strife in the next province but they themselves in 30 years had never seen any or any evidence of any.

*Q: Well, after that sojourn in Khartoum, you moved to Washington. You were sent to INR.*

SULLIVAN: I became after a little interim step around because of the personnel situation, the branch chief for Central European Intelligence Research for about three years.

*Q: What problems did you have in that job?*

SULLIVAN: None, that was a lovely job. I liked it very much. We had excellent civil service personnel there on the whole, particularly in my branch. The work was interesting and broad gauge. We were often in close touch so far as working in a supplemental way with the German desk and Austrian desk, etc. It was all together quite a nice thing. But it was somewhat diminished in interest when we got Roger Hilsman as the new Director of Intelligence Research, who came with the idea that we should give the money expended by the CIA for our intelligence efforts in classified encyclopedic writing and that sort of stuff, back to the Agency so that we wouldn't be beholden to them. This went through with the result that there was a very drastic reduction in the staff and it meant that much of the work we could do rather readily before either could not be done at all now or could be done with much difficulty.

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*Q: Did you have difficulty getting good officers into INR?*

SULLIVAN: Well, I didn't experience it in my branch. The rumor was that Foreign Service officers assigned to INR were misfits or in trouble. I don't know, there probably is some basis for this, but I didn't know of it in person and certainly not in the branch area I was in. Some of this came from the assignment of personnel, junior personnel in particular, to biographic reporting. That section was headed by a civil servant who was such a masterful biographic profile writer that he could take a piece of the petrified forest and make it come to life by damming it. And against that, no one was going to show up as a good biographic reporter, particularly junior officers.

*Q: You finished your tour in INR in 1962 and was sent for labor training. Is that correct?*

SULLIVAN: Yes. At that time, another circular came by my desk when I was about to finish my three years in Washington and I called up and said with all this Wristonization I didn't know what was available in the way of assignments but I wanted to know if I was too old for this, as I had done it before I was interested in it. And they said, "Just put your name in the pot and you probably would be taken."

*Q: Where was this training to take place?*

SULLIVAN: The training was ostensibly mostly in Washington under the aegis of American University. It actually was coordinated by a former trade unionist who was a long time labor affairs officer, Ollie Peterson, who was the husband of the then Secretary of Labor, Esther Peterson. It was coordinated by Ollie with members of the faculty at American University and other personages in the Washington area. It also included numerous field trips. For example, I spent a week with the Connecticut Department of Labor. I spent another week with the Steel Workers Union in Pennsylvania and another week with the International Machinists' Regional Director for Eastern Ohio. I spent ten days in Chicago working with a variety of agencies there including a mediation agency.

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We had single shots at chambers of commerce and things of this sort. It was a good broad gauge labor training. Labor then in the Foreign Service was really misnamed. It should be called like the other countries have done, Social Attach#s because the real realm of work, which varies from country to country with the development of that country and the culture of that country, really involves almost all affairs that concern the people on either side of the relationship between employers and employees, whether private or public.

*Q: Did you feel that was a year well spent to prepare you for your next assignment?*

SULLIVAN: Yes, indeed. Having had some field practice—I worked quite a bit as we all did over in the International Labor Affairs Bureau in the Labor Department—having had somewhat more experience than some other classmates of mine, I think I was able to get a lot more from it because I had a lot more pegs to hang on.

*Q: Following that you were sent to Bonn where we linked up again in 1963 and you came as assistant labor attach#.*

SULLIVAN: That is right.

*Q: That certainly is one of the most important labor assignments in the world I would think.*

SULLIVAN: That was a very nice assignment for me and for my boss. My boss was, again, a long term trade unionist, although he was somewhat on the academic side. He was an immigrant from Norway as a child and started to speak English when he was nine years old. He educated himself, worked his way through college where I believe he took a degree in chemistry. He then got a masters in teaching and finally a Ph.D. in labor, at three different institutions. He had come from a tour as the labor attach#

In Sweden at a time in which not only was the Socialist party of Sweden running the entire country, but most of the people who were running the party were the laborists, the Swedish labor unions. So he knew both politics and unionism tied together in a socialist

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form of government. He was a great personality. He was a friendly personality. He spoke inaccurate, but fluent German and could get along quite well with most of the people. He was a great contact man. I was more or less the intelligence research section in back of him doing some of the substance that required more knowledge of the German background, more knowledge of the legal structure and German politics, etc. So, I think we had a good team together. And we, of course, at that time had local staff that had been working together in this field and selected and reselected ever since the post war years in Germany. So it was pretty much a crack team not yet debilitated by age.

*Q: Did he and you feel that what you were producing and doing there was appreciated by other elements of the embassy?*

SULLIVAN: This unfortunately applied as much to Bonn as anywhere else and often was a discussion among labor attach#s. It depended largely on the background of the other officers. The tendency among Foreign Service officers is to look down on labor for whatever reason. And the tendency for them if they have to pay attention is to give it grudging attention. There are exceptions and when the exceptions wish to exploit labor, since labor can't exploit the embassy, they get very good joint results out of this.

*Q: I know, I have personal experience with that. I needn't explain that to you.*

SULLIVAN: In part this is because they are call labor attach#s. If they were called social attach#s, it would be a different matter perhaps.

*Q: Did the feedback you got on your reporting come mainly from State or from Labor?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, the feedback was almost exclusively from Labor. I must modify that because the feedback you got from State was from the Labor man in State, but the International Labor Affairs Bureau is a first rate operation in its field and even the least contributions are welcomed. And you often get welcome information from them, too,

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usually informally, which is quicker and better. Those interested in the material were not interested in making marks.

*Q: After that tour in Bonn you moved on to Vienna and there you were the labor attach# under several ambassadors.*

SULLIVAN: And the second man in the political section. As a result of turnovers, which are too numerous to detail, I spent almost a third of my time there as the acting political counselor and probably half of that breaking in the person assigned to be the next political counselor, which was all right because Austria is a much smaller country than Germany. The trade union movement is very similar and it was not terribly difficult to do both.

*Q: You had three ambassadors there.*

SULLIVAN: Yes.

*Q: Were they interested in labor and the work you were doing?*

SULLIVAN: I think you can say yes, but Mr. Riddleberger was ambassador when I was first there and although we didn't overlap much time I knew he was interested in labor. The second ambassador was a look-down-your-nose at labor type, a career man all the way.

*Q: That was Ambassador MacArthur.*

SULLIVAN: That's right. And it was mutual. The labor people looked down their nose at him too. The last man was a private businessman, John Humes, a fine personality from New York City and was interested in labor because he didn't know anything about it and he was interested in learning things he didn't know something about. He was also, to the extent that labor people had dealings with him, well received.

*Q: That is an attitude we like to see in ambassadors. Were the other embassy officers useful or helpful to you?*

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SULLIVAN: Well, by that time I was running close to 20 years in the German area and I didn't need an awful lot of help and Vienna always was somewhat a cold post. It is a delight to serve there if you like music, good food, cultivated atmosphere, etc., but there is a certain unreality about the place in two directions. One of them is the concern with this social and ethereal side of things and the other, mostly neglected in my experience by Americans, is the appreciation of the potential of Vienna, the place to find out about other places. It is a marvelous source of good intelligence if people will work at it. Unfortunately, the labor movement in Austria was very active in trying to exploit these sources because historically from the times of Russian occupation and because of the financing that the Soviet Union gave to the Austrian Communist Party, and to which was made available to some elements of the Austrian trade unionists that had communist leanings, there were cheap vacations for all Austrians that were association with trade unions, but all were in the Soviet area of control.

*Q: The Bulgarian beaches, etc.*

SULLIVAN: Oh, yes, that is true, and I was able to get the first group that the Austrian trade unionists decided to go to the United States, which was a fantastically interesting business, because when the group, all of whom were school teachers who taught English, got to New York, the bus line that was to take them for their whole trip was on strike and they had to travel in this scab-operated bus. They got a great view of America.

*Q: Did you find your labor contacts there were in favor of Austria joining the Common Market, or did they even discuss that?*

SULLIVAN: At that time, which was the late sixties, EFTA, the European Free Trade Association, was the center of all discussion, to the extent there was discussion. Kreisky, of course, was at the peak of his powers at that time.

*Q: What about anti-Semitism? Was there much of it there?*

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SULLIVAN: Well, yes and no. Perhaps I can tell you a story about that. I think it was the six day war that took place while I was there.

*Q: Yes, June, 1967.*

SULLIVAN: And on the morning after the Six Day War started, there were people with little baskets and blue and white flowers standing on almost every street corner in Vienna, soliciting donations for Israel. We received a circular message from the State Department which I assumed went to all the countries, at least in Western Europe, asking us to report on the local reaction to this outbreak. At a staff meeting the ambassador asked us to all fan out and check with our contacts, etc. What I found, probably because of the nature of my contacts that I worked on and at that time were all labor types, was a singular uniformity, they being much more open than most Austrians who tend to try to be diplomatic when talking to diplomats. They said to understand why Austrians are out soliciting funds for Israel and to reconcile that with known anti-Semitic history of Austria, you have to remember one thing. Although these Austrians are soliciting funds for Israel and are giving them to Israel, it does not change their anti-Semitic attitudes. They have nothing against Jews, but they prefer them in Israel.

*Q: That is a very telling point. What about neo-Nazism, was that a problem at all?*

SULLIVAN: Not much more of a problem, I would say, at that time than hippies. There were known to be 16 hippies in all of Austria with eleven of them in Vienna. This is something, the hippies in particular, that does not comport with the Austrian's idea of dress or behavior. And, at the time, so far as the right wing leanings were concerned, they probably were always there, they probably are always everywhere except they did not come to the surface at that time as there were no particular problems and there was no charismatic figure at that time.



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*Q: What were their general attitude towards Germany and the Germans? Would they have liked an Anschluss?*

SULLIVAN: No, the thing they tried to stress all the time was distinction, much as the Bavarians do. The Bavarians claim not to be Germans and the Austrians claim not to be Germans. I think it was Bismarck who described the Bavarians as God's unsuccessful effort to make a German out of an Austrian.

*Q: Neutralism. Was that a main force when you were there?*

SULLIVAN: Yes, pretty much. That does not mean much by itself. If you compare the Swedish neutrality, for example, the Swiss neutrality, Austrian neutrality is distinctly different. Two of them arm themselves to the teeth, namely, the Swiss and the Swedes unlike the Austrians. Yet Austria has been in almost all of the wars.

*Q: You were there during the 1968 Czech crisis. What effect did that have on our embassy and you personally in your work?*

SULLIVAN: I had a busy night. We had an administrative officer who I had not seen since my days in Berlin, Roy Nelson. He had been on post about two weeks and did not speak German. Our ambassador decided to give the handling of this mundane thing to the DCM who liked to emulate the ambassador and delegated it to Mr. Nelson. Actually, what the job was for us was mainly to try and be in touch with local Austrian factions that might be involved in trying to help a rather massive diplomatic evacuation from Prague which our embassy was trying to steer from that end. Most of the work was done by Austrians. They called for volunteers and they had practically every Viennese taxicab driver volunteer to drive to Prague and bring somebody back. They got the same response from bus drivers. The short distance to clear the railroad lines from the Czech border into Austria were cleared by the state run railways right away. The only problem was finding out when, if and how the people were going to get out of Prague essentially. They ultimately did it by train

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and by that time I had been working on that end of things because of my experience when they had the Hungarian uprising next door I knew some of the problems that happened out there with language difficulties. We were able to get together with other embassies who were interested and with the Austrians who had a pretty good organization to arrange it that when the trains came in a standard announcement would be made in a variety of languages to hang in there and we would come and get them one at a time and put them on transportation and find them a place to eat and sleep, etc. It all went pretty well, although we were pestered pretty much by telephone calls from the United States which may be the reason that the ambassador and the DCM went home rather than answer the phone. So, I did most of the answering of the phone and found out that the phone lines were very unreliable and the connections broke.

*Q: That happens in crises sometimes.*

SULLIVAN: Yes, it does.

*Q: Well, those were interesting years for you in Vienna.*

SULLIVAN: Yes.

*Q: But then you went on to your own post.*

SULLIVAN: That's right.

*Q: In 1970 you were moved to Bremen as consul general.*

SULLIVAN: That's right.

*Q: What occupied your time in Bremen?*

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SULLIVAN: It wasn't a duty, but the first thing I did on that assignment was to rejoice because since the mid-fifties I had set my plans to some time in my career be principal officer at Bremen.

*Q: You had specifically picked out Bremen?*

SULLIVAN: Right. And I wanted to serve as a Foreign Service inspector, which in fact I did after I left Bremen. In fact, while at Bremen I served as an inspector once, I inspected Sweden in the summer time.

It was a nice post to go to for many reasons. First, having worked in practically all of the fields, except specifically commerce, to have what was essentially a commercial post, although heavily on the agricultural/commerce side, to round out my experience. And Bremen is, of course, somewhat apart from Germany as most people who know it will agree. Much like my hometown of Boston is a little apart from the United States in some similar ways. Identifiable speech, for example. And, again, I was the beneficiary of a staff that was well seasoned and not yet decrepit, although as mandatory health, as practiced in Germany, one of the problems was that the folks all kept coming up with preventative cures in addition to the maximum leave they got. But they covered well for one another. It was a good post.

*Q: How would you characterize your relations with the embassy in Bonn?*

SULLIVAN: Oh, top notch. I had no problem because they had no problem with Bremen and I had no problem with them. You see, it depends again on the personalities involved. I was serving at the embassy when we had quite an active ambassador, you were there at the same time...

*Q: That was Ambassador McGhee.*

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SULLIVAN: That's right. And who wanted to feel involved in almost everything. This makes a problem if you are in a consular operation. It is much better if the consul can operate fairly independently in his own district, in close accord with whatever the embassy wants to have done, but to do it oneself. If you have some visiting expert, it dilutes the impact the principal officer has in the area and often doesn't help you. Sometimes your better contacts will tell you that if you want to know anything you may send your German employee who understands what I have to say, but keep that minister of yours from Bonn away from me.

*Q: So you got the help and direction when you needed it if you needed it.*

SULLIVAN: That's right. We had a good front office in the embassy at that time. Of course, you know it was Martin Hillenbrand.

*Q: Yes, he had served in his early career years in Bremen.*

SULLIVAN: Had started his post-war career in Bremen.

*Q: Were there attempts at that time to close Bremen?*

SULLIVAN: Yes. There had been a partial closure before with a significant amount of the materials and files and responsibilities transferred to Hamburg and I believe it was after four years it was found that the material transferred up there had not even been unpacked and nobody had done anything with the responsibilities to the area so it came back. It was part of a perennial thing, I think, they have probably been closing Bremen ever since it was opened in 1794. There are pros and cons. At that time it was a useful post to continue to have open largely because we were doing somewhere to the order of \$400 odd million worth of commerce in tobacco and cotton, which were practically monopolies of Bremen. This was certainly enough to pay the rent and the staff pay and we were able to do some breakthrough work in fisheries which was a change from all the previous times when we couldn't do any. Although that wasn't followed up in the States and we lost it all to

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Canada a few years later. But we got a great deal of help, particularly on the tobacco end, with the Common Market. Again, that was a federal...tobacco being what it is as a commodity today...but people who do not know the agricultural field do not appreciate how much agricultural expertise can come into play in multi-international negotiations on taxation because customs officials, the ones who open packages and sniff away, don't know anything about the products. And if you send tax experts to negotiate something in Brussels without knowledge of the contents that their taxes are applied to, you can get screwed. And in our self-interest, Bremen tobacco interests, who knew whenever a seedling was placed anywhere on the face of the earth, kept telling us what we needed to know so we could relay it to the embassy for relay to Brussels, etc.

But, again, my thoughts on the closure of the post at that time, were that they ought to get off the dime and decide if they want to have three posts, they could have Hamburg, they could have an embassy and they could have Munich.

*Q: Certainly you would also need Frankfurt.*

SULLIVAN: I would say no because Frankfurt has the biggest airport and that is where all the congressmen go and if you are more removed from the airport you are more removed from the congressmen. On the other hand, if you wanted to have more service based upon knowledge of what goes on at the working level, you should probably cut all the post down to the size of Bremen or maybe even smaller. Something like a two man post. The French do it much better. Of course they are located much closer and the Germans can visit France, but the French tend to have...for example, they had in my backyard a French consul which was run by two French persons and two local persons. They had themes they worked on. Of course, one was culture and the other one was trade of a type that sells over time. They could pin point things and with their efforts do a bang up job. The rest of the stuff you just ignored it for the time being or did what was necessary, because France was not that far away.

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*Q: While you were in Bremen, a US military post was opened in your district, not far from the city. What were your relations with that and was it welcomed by the people?*

SULLIVAN: Top notch, for the simple reason of the nature of that post and the nature of the responsibilities that it had meant that willy-nilly the personnel assigned to that post knew that they were part of a radiating operation and they were not small minded about anything. They knew the importance of their function better than many of their users did. Of course, our interests were mutual and the people in Bremerhaven, which was closer to the base than Bremen, had top notch relations. And this went for all branches of the service, too, although the Air Force wasn't up there very much.

*Q: Your tour in Bremen came to an end in 1974. Was it then that you were sent to the Inspection Corp?*

SULLIVAN: Yes.

*Q: Where did you inspect?*

SULLIVAN: The first tour was seven months and I inspected the Bureau of Consular Relations and Security Affairs.

*Q: That was very fitting given your background.*

SULLIVAN: Yes.

*Q: And then you were sent abroad for inspection?*

SULLIVAN: Yes. The first inspection lasted seven months and was the first inspection of the Department that was authorized to be held by the Inspection Corps. And it was quite interesting. It may have done a little bit of good, but it is hard to say because consular operations, and to a degree security operations, are so heavily involved with Congressional authority and the Congress never wants to get rid of anything. The main

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problem we had with consular work, and to some degree with security work, is getting rid of standing requirements that may have started in 1802 and lost all meaning by 1810. That is the perennial problem. For example, we had fine working relationships in consular affairs with the staff of most Congressional and Senatorial offices. They knew who handled what by name and had the telephone number to call if they had a constituent query. And we knew who to call over there if questions came our way. A typical conversation between Harry and Jill would be over in ten minutes and Harry in the State Department would say, "Would you like to have a piece of paper on it?" "Oh, yes, we have to have written confirmation of our conversation," Jill would say. Well, then Harry would draft a confirmation but it would go to his boss John...

Ultimately this would get to the assistant secretary's office for his or her signature which might take a week. And then it would take another week to get delivered to the Hill. This is nonsense.

*Q: I presume with fax machines these days things are going a little smoother. Did you inspect any posts overseas?*

SULLIVAN: Yes, the first inspection we worked among the Arabs again, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. These were more interesting inspecting the desks than it was the embassies. As a matter of fact, we did not have relations with two of those countries at the time of the inspection. Then relations in those two places were not terribly good. Two of us went down to inspect Oran, which was a one-man junior officer post and he knew everybody because he was away from the capital and Oran was a commercial town and more open and interested in other things. So that was quite interesting. Tunis is just a magnificent pretty place. Very interesting, very sophisticated, very advanced and to the extent that we could follow it, the politics was a little too internal to follow very well. Nice post though.

*Q: With regard to the Inspection Corps, looking back at it would you say that it is necessary in today's world? How would you change it if you could?*

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SULLIVAN: Well, it is hard to give an answer to something like that in the abstract and not associate it with anything else. Let me say that as of that time and during my previous career, I thought that the inspections by and large were a very good operation, and I will explain shortly why. In effect, well before an inspection, notice is given to a post that they are going to come around and are going to look at all this sort of stuff, which gives you plenty of time to get it all in shape. Then they come out and look at it. If you haven't got it in shape by that time, you are in pretty bad shape. They often can bring, depending on the composition of the team, a good deal of helpful hints. Maybe not to some of the senior people, but even there sometimes they can, but to the junior and middle grade people they can perhaps tell them how it used to be somewhere else and if the people are alert they will be able to pick up some useful information. The trouble I think is that they expect the inspectors to do what should be done between the post leaders and the desk offices. Depending upon the size of the post and, of course, two of the ones I worked with were not recognized posts, and the other one was a minor country and the fourth one that I inspected when I was consul general was Sweden and at that time we were in such outs with the Swedes that we had a political officer acting as ambassador. But, presumably the larger the post the further away the top brass of the posts get from the desk officer. And you find things that the desk is expecting this, that and the other thing, and the field never heard of it, or it fell between the cracks and vice versa. So basically it is a good idea to have a review and have somebody come out and say, "You have had three months to straighten this up, why didn't you?" and have him tell you.

On the other hand, it is questionable what reception they get. It is a great deal of effort to go to brief a team on a set of problems in a particular atmosphere and go out and look at them in that atmosphere and come back and present them and have people ignore almost everything so far as the people inspected are concerned or the people who did the inspection are concerned or the people who suggested that they inspect this, that or the other, is concerned. I would think it more effective if the Department would pay more attention to having it. In that concern I am not very much in favor of having outside



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inspectors. I think it quite a good idea to have outside inspectors perhaps in the area of accounts and stuff like that because we don't have enough accountants and outside accountants would feel it a vacation to see a few zeros at the back side of numbers.

*Q: The program inspectors you would not recommend outsiders?*

SULLIVAN: No. I would not be terribly aggrieved if I were running the State Department to exempt administrative officers from being inspectors. I think it would work a lot of wonders if non-administrative personnel had to go out and inspect post administration. It might open a lot of eyes usefully. It is again, a team effort to look at a team performance and we should not cater to the different parts of it. I say this with some prejudice because as you know from what we have been talking about, I have worked in almost all the facets under discussion here, but I did a great deal of work because of my capacity in the language of the regions that I served in, with USIS. Even down in Tubingen I had to find a building for USIS among other things. I believe you have to have some sense of the team activity. This was enhanced as the labor attach# because the labor attach#, or as I prefer social attach#, you are looking at an entire, at least an entire segment, but in most countries it is not that stratified. You are working with a large segment that is hooked in with everything else with matters from minimum wage rates, pensions, health concerns, schooling, education, the whole sphere is yours from the practical standpoint. And then you are considered..."Oh, he is just the labor attach#" in the team that you are a member of at the time. So, you need to have some broader concept. If the rates on US bonds go from 6 to 7 percent, you don't need a treasury attach# to tell you that.

*Q: Some people think of the Inspection Corps as a place for gripes. The personnel at post can pour out all its unhappiness leading to problems. Did you find much of that?*

SULLIVAN: Oh yes. But not quite as you depicted it. The most remarkable thing in Tunis was that we had a career ambassador there who is a specialist in the area who had a highly competent DCM who was a yes man because that was what was called for.

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*Q: The ambassador needed a yes man.*

SULLIVAN: And they wanted the inspectors to solve two or three personnel problems they had which proved to be of their own making, but they didn't want to take any action on them. Oh, I did not have any personnel at any of the posts I was at, make explicit complaints about the lack of competency of other persons for whom they work, although they did have adverse comments about their manners of going about their business. But, it wasn't really a gripe session.

*Q: Then at the posts you referred to, the inspectors would lay this on the chief of mission and his deputy what the problems were that they found?*

SULLIVAN: Well, I am not sure we had all that much to do with it, but the career ambassador that I mentioned went into limbo for five years, in stead of getting another post right away as he expected. The DCM that we couldn't explain why he was a yes man because he had such competence and had such a ranging background, made ambassador the next year.

*Q: So, finally, Ken, I want to ask you, looking back on your lengthy career and the several fields in which you have been involved, what are your views now on the Foreign Service in general?*

SULLIVAN: Well, I have thought about that considerably but I am not too sure that my thoughts are worth much. I would go at it from the standpoint of what kind of people you ought to have. I think you ought to stress when taking people that they have competence in English. I think you ought to stress that they have reasonable foundation in economics with maybe a subspecialty in statistics. I think it goes without question that they should be computer literate at some level which I can't specify.

*Q: Certainly these days.*

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SULLIVAN: Yes. And I would not be upset at all if one reinstituted a language requirement. Taking in a hundred or even two hundred officers a year in a country the size of ours with the number of persons that pursue at least college level education, I do not think that it is too much to expect that we could get a hundred or two hundred a year that bring with them at no government expense some sort of basic language ability, particularly since language is now much better taught in the United States than in the old days when you parsed ancient, classical texts, etc.. Because there is absolutely no substitute for being able to communicate, if for no other reason than to make a contact happy that you have taken the trouble to learn his language.

*Q: Yes, absolutely.*

SULLIVAN: That's about what I would have to say.

*Q: Would you recommend the Foreign Service as a career if a person came up and asked about a young person? Did you find it that satisfying?*

SULLIVAN: Well, I have had a few occasions to do that and what I have generally said is that it is a very nice career if you like it. It is pretty hard on wives and families. Other than that I don't know what you can fairly say because I am so far removed from what people of the age of say 25 are thinking, or what they know.

*Q: Finally, I want to ask you your thoughts on specialization for a Foreign Service officer, in your case labor and in other cases other fields. Do you think we should do more of that or should we stick to the well-rounded officer?*

SULLIVAN: I would tend to stress whatever the basics happen to be at the time. These will change with the generations. But you basically need to have literacy in your own language. That means speaking it too. And I think we need to have the foundation of all that goes on now which is economical and not political. Politics nowadays is economic. And you should have a basis in some language so that you can show that you could learn

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another language usefully, and also to save money. To make it an incentive that you learn this. I became a labor specialist because I went to Dusseldorf to temporarily fill a political slot and then to fill an administrative slot and then a professional labor man who was called home at threat of losing his permanent job and I learned on the spot how to do it. I don't think I needed to go through the labor training that I did in the late sixties to go out again because I had more than three years in Dusseldorf in a very busy, high level type operation with good support. I had never even taken a course in politics in college and my functional role was political officer. And I worked and did satisfactory at a so-called commercial post. In between times I worked a couple of stints in consular work in good busy posts with basic special problems on the side. And I think if you get a good liberal arts background, modified by something that gives you the basic tools you might need for whatever comes up in the Foreign Service you are all right. Pick somebody up once in a while if you need a specialist. We had a spell, when out of fear the Senate might think we were going soft on communist, we kept grinding out so many Sovietologists that it was likely that some of them wouldn't get even one posting to Moscow unless communism collapsed.

*Q: Well, thank you very much Ken.*

End of interview